



P O Box 627. Delta. CO. 81416

February 15, 2019

Colorado Public Utilities Commission
1560 Broadway #250
Denver CO 80202

Re: PUC Docket # 18F-0866E

Dear Chairman Ackermann and Commissioners Koncilia and Gavan:

Delta County Economic Development (DCED) submits these comments in support of the December 6, 2018 complaint, filed by Delta-Montrose Electric Association (DMEA), which asks the PUC to set a nondiscriminatory charge for DMEA to exit from Tri-State. We understand that membership in a cooperative like Tri-State is voluntary, and that DMEA has the right to exit under fair terms and for a fair charge.

DCED is located in DMEA's service territory. Many of our investors and customers are also members of DMEA and are affected by DMEA's power supply costs and the inflexibility of Tri-State. We know that Tri-State's average member rates have increased by 56% since 2005. We also know that Tri-State has limited DMEA's ability to develop local renewable generation in our own backyard, despite the low cost and numerous benefits of such generation to our communities. We believe that DMEA's local and community minded approach to the cost of electricity is an economic benefit. DMEA's community inclusiveness to work with local businesses helped employ out of work coal miners and supported a then struggling company, Lightworks Fiber and Consulting, to expand and grow. The cost of energy is an economic development issues for Western Colorado, job-producing companies care about the cost of power when deciding whether to locate in our area or elsewhere. Rate stabilization will help existing businesses maintain local jobs and remain viable in our communities. In many aspects DMEA is a great community partner and valuable asset.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of DCED I am writing to ask the PUC to exercise its jurisdiction over Tri-State and set a just, reasonable and non-discriminatory exit charge for DMEA. Ensuring our local communities gain access to energy at more stable rates.

Thank you for considering our comments. I ask that they be included in the public record for Docket #18F-0866E.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stacey R. Voigt".

Stacey Voigt

Executive Director